Expenditure for Exchange of Agricultural Information

3994. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether government have been incurring expenditure in foreign exchange by way of payment of membership fee to various foreign agencies for the exchange of information, Scientists and officials in the field of agriculture;

(b) if so, how many Scientists and other officals have been exchanged and the seminar held for mutual benefits;

(c) whether the benefits are in consonance with the expenditure incurred by Government; and

(d) the details of benefits during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The annual membership fee being paid to the following foreign agencies:—

(i) Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

(ii) Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux International (CABI)

(iii) Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institute (APAARI).

(iv) Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and Pacific (NACA).

(v) Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and tuber Crops in the Humid tropics of Asia and the Pacific (CGPRT Centre).

(vi) International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

(b) to (d) These foregin organisations held 266 seminars, workshops, training programmes etc. & 477 Indian scientists benefited through participation in these programmes since January, 1995. The benefits received from each of these agencies in the form of participation of Indian scientists in their programmes, exchange of scientific information, new scientific developments, germplasm material, etc. are far greater than the annual membership paid by the Government.

Central Scheme for Feed and Fodder Development in Maharashtra

3995. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Central Scheme for Feed and Fodder Development is under implementation in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have assessed the success of the scheme in the State;

(d) if so, the findings thereof; and

(e) what other measures are being taken by Central and State Governments to increase the production of fodder in the State particularly in the scarce areas of Vidarbha region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Maharashtra was provided assistance as shown below:—

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Activity	Year of Release	Amount Released
1. Strengthening of fodder seed production farm.	1994-95	15.00
2. Enrichment of straw and cellulosic wastes.	1994-95 & 1997-98	5.61
3. Grass Land Development including grass reserves	1995-96 & 1996-97	5.47

Further 59,752 fodder minikits were distributed in the State in the 8th Plan period. The Central Government's Regional Station for Forage Production and Demonstration at Palaj, Gandhinagar conducted fodder demonstrations and training for the benefit of the farmers of Maharashtra.

(c) and (d) The assistance provided to the State has been utilised properly.

(e) In the Vidarbha region Integrated Dairy Development Projects with fodder development components have been taken up in the districts of Yeotmal, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Akola and Wasim.